

EXPERIENCE DIFFERENT VIEWS. DISCOVER COMMON GROUND



friendship force
MINNESOTA - TWIN CITIES



NEWS AND EVENTS
you don't want to miss!



"CUBA TODAY AND YESTERDAY"
Presented by Jane Norman

THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1:00 TO 3:00 PM

To me, Cuba was one of the most fascinating countries of all my travels. There is so much we don't know about this neighboring country that is trying to reconnect with the United States and get behind their stigma of being a communist/socialist country. Join Jane Norman for a DVD presentation held on:

THURSDAY, March 1st 1:00 - 3:00

ROSEVILLE LIBRARY - COMMUNITY PROGRAM ROOM
2180 Hamline Avenue North, Roseville MN



SUPER REGIONAL CONFERENCE – CINCINNATI

All members are welcome to register for the Super Regional Conference hosted by Friendship Force of Greater Cincinnati on April 20-21 at the Radisson Inn Cincinnati Riverfront. The theme of this conference is "Unlocking the Future of Friendship Force". The Dayton, OH club is offering preconference hosting April 16-20. Members of the Cincinnati club are offering up to three nights of "Bed and Breakfast" hosting following the conference. Limited availability so sign up for hosting early. New members may find this a great learning experience. Three Regions, Great Lakes, Midwest and Southwest will be attending.

so it's a great way to make new friends from across the country. Here's what our regional rep, Dale Moore, has to say about why we should attend:

- Meet and connect with FFI staff members
- Network and make connections with persons from other clubs
- Learn how Friendship Force needs to change in the future
- Gain ideas for leading your club, journeys, activities, etc.

For more information:

<http://friendshipforcetwincities.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Registration-Flyer.pdf>



WORDS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

By Rita Mays

**It's a Small World After All:
Explore, understand and Serve**

Are you looking for opportunities to become more acquainted with our global world in 2018? Then Friendship Force of Minnesota Twin Cities is just one of your go-to places to make global connections and learn about other countries. We help shrink the distances between countries by increasing our understanding and heart connections!

Check out the stories in this newsletter to learn about Cuba and the Ukraine Open World Incoming Journey. Consider a regional trip to Cincinnati to learn about the Future of Friendship Force and be a guest in home stays in Cincinnati and Dayton Ohio. Watch for more information about our own mini-trip to Northern Minnesota, August 12-14 to understand the history of the Iron Range and current mining issues, lead by Jane Norman.

Can you feel the *anticipation* in the air as we prepare for our 40th Anniversary Celebration? Picture a crisp fall Sunday afternoon on September 9th with former and current members gathering at the Lafayette Club on Minnetonka Beach to share memories and welcome new Open World friends from the Ukraine. Part of the *anticipation and excitement* will be in the planning, creating collections of memories and stories to capture our history and locating old friends to invite to the event. Take a look at the many *opportunities to be in service*. (See pages six and seven.)

Do you want to know what's happening and when?

Besides this wonderful newsletter edited by Barb Emer and list of activities prepared by John Christensen and Jane Norman, (see page four), check out our website www.friendshipforcetwincities.org or FFMNTC Face book page. Periodically you will receive email updates, thanks to our Vice President, Jane Bardon, who is coordinating our communications. If you

RSVP. Remember, we need your reply, even if it is "no". For Friendship Force International updates and additional Journeys, watch for FFI emails

Rita Mays, President

BOARD DIRECTORS

President: Rita Mays

Vice-President: Jane Bardon

Treasurer: Buck MacDonald

Secretary: Tom Scott

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Activities:

Jane Norman and John Christensen

Historian:

Jan Lanyk

Journey Coordinator

Mary Cunningham

Member at large

Ben Szyplinski

Membership:

Jane Bardon

Webmaster:

Newsletter Editor

Barb Emer

To contact a board member, go to our club's website: friendshipforcetwincities.org. Click on "Board Contacts" in the red bar at the top; then click on the individual you would like to contact.

Newsletter Deadline April 15th

Costa Rica: Pura Vida



Nineteen of us experienced the warmth and welcome of our Tico hosts as we journeyed to West Alajuela, Costa Rica for a 7 night home stay January 9-16, 2018. Seventeen ambassadors from our club and one each from England and Connecticut also joined us. Alas, our co-leader Gene Selchow and his wife were unable to travel with us.

Highlights of our homestays for some included attending a wedding, ice skating (yes, in Costa Rica!) and participating in cultural religious observances.

Knowing a bit of Spanish helped in communicating while many found creative ways to use sign language and translator apps. Technology has really enhanced our ability to communicate.

On our first morning, there was a ceremony in Parque de la Amistad (Peace Park) in Alajuela, at which a memorial plaque was unveiled honoring our visit. It was quite moving, with banners and flags waving, the national anthem playing and speeches given. We then continued on to City Hall, where we met with officials including the Mayor, and were welcomed into the City. The welcome party later in the day was quite a garden fiesta, with good visiting, food, music, dancing and more. The next day we traveled with our hosts by bus through mountains and coffee fields, to the Pacific coast beaches to enjoy an overnight at Playa Hermosa. Sunny warm weather greeted us as did a lovely beach to walk along.

Saturday morning we explored the capital of San Jose, touring the National Theater and National Museum where we studied the history of Costa Rica from the 16th to the 21st centuries. After free time with our families on Sunday, we gathered for an early farewell party, again with good visiting, food and music. Our group offered a brief program of words, poetry, soloist and ensemble. There were moments of laughter (kazoo encore) as well as heartfelt tears and emotion.

Our final day with our hosts included a bus ride to Irazu volcano. Alas, the rainy season that usually ends in November had continued into January, so no viewing. A reason to return perhaps?! Our final stop was at the Basilica of Cartago where up to a million Costa Ricans make an annual pilgrimage in early August.

Thirteen of us continued on a post trip of 8 nights/9 days with Horizontes Tours. Our knowledgeable and patient guide made the 8 days of rain tolerable as we wondered if we would ever dry out! Only minutes before our tour commenced did we get word that the road to the Tortuguero rain forest area had been cleared of mudslides. Our entry to the area continued with an hour long boat ride arriving at our individual lodges that were built on stilts. We ventured out on open boats, kayaks and on foot to explore nature. Wildlife sightings included crocodiles, lizards, frogs, iguanas, monkeys, insects and a multitude of birds and butterflies.

More post trip memories include making tortillas, relaxing in thermal pools and venturing out on a hike taking us over a series of hanging bridges.

We're grateful for the kindness and warm welcome of our Tico hosts and guides. Pura Vida!

Rosie Foreman

Side note: For those interested in politics, Costa Rica will hold their national elections on Easter Sunday. Don't get too confused as both candidates have the same surname (not related).

LOOKING AHEAD

John and I are pleased to be planning a variety of activities for this coming year. You will notice that we are keeping many of your favorites and adding a few extras. We hope to have a number of activities emphasizing travel as an opportunity for members to invite friends to see what we're about.

Jane Norman and John Christensen, Activity Chairs

CUBA PRESENTATION (see first page)

Thursday, March 1st 1:00-3:00

BACHMANS – LUNCH AT PATRICKS CAFE

Tuesday, April 10th 11:00

6010 Lyndale Avenue South, Minneapolis

Contact John Christensen for lunch reservations at jchristensen2@juno.com or 612-361-1078. Some may wish to tour the Ideas House. No reservations needed for that.

SUPER REGIONAL CONFERENCE – CINCINNATI

Fri. & Sat. April 20-21. See first page for information

SAVE THE DATE

Monday, June 18th, 11:30 – Lunch at Lord Fletchers

Saturday, July 14th – Semi-Annual Meeting and picnic

August, 14-16 - Iron Range mini trip (See this page)

Sunday, Sept. 9th 40th Anniversary celebration

October – Fall neighborhood dinners

November - Surprise event

Saturday, December 1st 2018 Annual Meeting and holiday gathering

Spring is in sight!



NORTHERN MINNESOTA'S MESABI RANGE TOUR

Our three-day, two-night mini trip to the Range is an opportunity to try something different. We know that many members are no longer traveling internationally, but small three day tours, especially in our state, might be something you would enjoy. I for one, have become passionate about our state and all it has to offer, from both a historical and beauty aspect. So you might find this mini tour something that you would enjoy and if all goes well, we'll travel to a different area of Minnesota next year.

Take a trip back in time to Minnesota's Mesabi Range to learn how this region has had such a major Influence in our state. This three-day, two-night mini trip will take you back in history starting with logging at the Forest History Center in the 1800's followed by the discovery of rich deposits of iron ore that made this part of the state one of the richest in the nation starting in the 1930's. All that changed in the 80's and now this area has been struggling to find their place in our modern world or to bring back mining.

Limited to 22 persons.

DATE: Tuesday, August 14th Thursday, August 16th

LODGING: We will be staying at the Timber Lake Lodge in Grand Rapids. This premiere hotel has many amenities including a large pool, hot tubs, attached restaurant and full hot breakfast.

What else is included: two picnic lunches, wine and cheese party.

ENTRANCE FEES TO THE FOLLOWING: Forest History Center and tour, Minnesota Discovery Center, Minnesota Museum of Mining and tour, Greyhound Bus Museum, Hibbing High School, Bob Dylan's childhood home, Hull Rust Mine and much more.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED: additional meals, and transportation. (If you have a vehicle that can transport 4 or more people and would be willing to drive, please let me know. What we have done in the past is that the passengers share the price of gas. This usually works well.)

The cost of the trip is \$175.00 per person. If you would like to secure a place, send a \$75.00 deposit after April 1st payable to Jane Norman, 6041 Sumter Place, New Hope, MN 55428. Questions: call 763-535-3096 or email me janeaway7@aol.com as I will be out of the country until March 1st.

Wesley Keith Wharton



- Wharton, Wesley Keith passed away peacefully on January 4, 2018, with his wife of 61 years and loving members of his family surrounding him. Keith, originally from West Texas, attended Texas Western College (University of Texas at El Paso) on a football scholarship where he was an all-conference tackle, playing on the football teams that won the 1954 and 1955 Sun Bowl games. As an undergraduate, he was voted into the Who's Who Among Students. After completing his MS and PhD degrees at the University of Northern Colorado, he moved with his family to Minnesota to accept a position at the University of Minnesota where he was Associate Dean in the College of Agriculture; his tenure included multiple occasions serving as Acting Dean. During his academic career he received many awards and in 1988 served as the chairman of RICOP, the resident instruction commission of the National Assn. of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges. He concluded his 37 years at the University back in the classroom, as a professor in the Department of Rhetoric, with students whom he loved to teach. Keith and his wife, Barbara moved to Greensboro, NC for several years where he was an active member of the Rotary Club. Keith proudly served on active duty as an officer in the United States Marine Corps, honorably discharged with the rank of Major; he always held fast to "Semper Fi." He will be greatly missed by his family and friends, especially his wife, Barbara. Memorial service plans are pending for the spring or summer.

Published on January 21, 2018 in the StarTribune

We are saddened that we have lost one of our long-time members of our Friendship Force Twin Cities Club. Keith and Barbara had returned to Minnesota and rejoined our club. Ben Szyplinski remembers both Keith and Barbara when she was vice-president under Barbara. She remembers Keith as always having a smile on his face and a positive attitude and states he was just a delight to be around. Our sympathy goes out to Barbara and family.

WELCOME HOME, COSTA RICA AMBASSADORS



Ambassadors shared their enthusiasm for their Journey to Costa Rica at a Welcome Home club event on February 11TH. The abundance of tropical fruits for the potluck reminded us of the wonderful fruits many of us experienced daily while in Costa Rica. Approximately 35 people came together to learn about the history, culture, and ecology of Costa Rica from Rosie Foreman and Mary Montagne. We experienced the trip through the lens of camera and Ambassador's cell phones in a slide show compiled by Blaine McCutchan. In addition to FFMNTC members, eight guests learned about home hosts, welcome parties, group tours and personal Journey experiences in West Alajuela and the nine-day post-tour exploring Costa Rica. Thanks to John Christensen and Jane Norman for organizing this event and to Barb Corbusier for hosting us.

Submitted by *Rita Mays*

ROSTOV-ON-DON, RUSSIA JOURNEY CANCELLED

We have recently learned that we will not be hosting the Rostov-on-Don club due to their difficulty in obtaining visas. While FFI attempted to enlist other clubs in Russia, they were unsuccessful in obtaining enough ambassadors. We are disappointed as planning had begun and we had so many members come forward to help plan and to offer their homes for hosting and dinner parties. We thank you and we are grateful for everyone's enthusiasm and willingness to participate. Submitted by *Cindy Cauble*

Open World Delegation from Ukraine - September 7-15, 2018

The FFMNTC Board voted to accept another Open World delegation in September. The delegation is from Ukraine (5 delegates, 1 facilitator and 1 interpreter). The dates in the host community are September 7-15, 2018. Open World provides funds to support the program; FFMNTC will need to provide home hosts and leaders to plan and implement the program.

FFMNTC Updates:

- Tom Scott has agreed to be program coordinator.
- The Delegates from Ukraine will join us at the FFMNTC 40th Anniversary Celebration on September 9, 2018.

Here is the description of the theme:

Health Care Management and Quality Assurance Rationale: *Ukraine is in the midst of undergoing significant reform of its healthcare system. One of the main goals of this reform is an efficient allocation of funds. Therefore through late 2017– early 2018 the Ministry of Health of Ukraine plans to introduce a new National Health Service, which will focus specifically on procurement. The current reforms envision a healthcare system that reforms primary, emergency, and palliative care simultaneously. The new National Health Service would be an independent body in the executive branch under the Cabinet of Ministers. The new reforms also aim to introduce medical insurance into the daily life of Ukrainians. Such a radical transformation of the healthcare system in Ukraine will benefit if healthcare managers and practitioners have an opportunity to learn from the American experience and current health care debate to see what works best for Ukraine.*

Can you help us recreate our history?

We are looking for names and contact information of former Friendship Force of Minnesota - Twin Cities members, especially those involved in the first trips and forming any of our Minnesota clubs in 1978. We want to invite as many former members to our 40th Anniversary Celebration as we are able to reach.

Since our history files prior to 1995 are rather sparse, can you help us identify and contact the presidents, leaders and historians from 1978-1995? Do you recall when the clubs in greater Minnesota merged into the Minnesota – Twin Cities club? Do you know when Lifetime Memberships were created and what was the inspiration behind this idea? (*continued*)

If you participated in Incoming or Outgoing Exchanges between 1978 and 1995, tell us what countries and clubs were involved and the year of the exchange.

If you have photos, exchange booklets, or newspaper articles, please share them with us! We would especially love to hear and share the unpublished, real stories of your adventures!

Contact me at ritamnffi@yahoo.com and we'll determine the best way to get your information or files and how we can add your pieces to the historical puzzle!

Rita Mays, President

Will you join us?

The Board and Volunteers are having fun learning about our club's history and stories. Will you help us as we prepare for our 40th Anniversary Celebration?

Friendship Opportunities starting in:

March:

- Planning Team
- Search for former members
- Work on Publicity and PR to promote our club in the community

Spring and Summer:

- Plan displays and program bulletin for September 9
- Write your own memories and stories for our newsletter and publicity
- Interview long time members and write or video tape their stories
- Assist with taking reservations and collecting money

September:

- Greet and welcome guests on September 9
- Coordinate or provide transportation for some guests
- Host out of town guests the weekend of September 9

Contact Rita Mays, President, ritamnffi@yahoo.com

How do we define a Journey that evolves and deepens our understanding of 'sense of place', of culture, history, people, and the ecological world we exist in? With each new Journey we expand our connection to the world we live in and experience everyday.

What is beauty, friendship... family?

What does it mean to be... really BE a Citizen Ambassador.

Submitted by *Blain McCutchan*



Connect with FFI

Are you getting regular emails from Friendship Force International in Atlanta GA? If not, it only takes a few minutes to subscribe to the FFI email list.

1. Go to the FFI website: www.friendshipforce.org
2. Scroll to the bottom of the page (any page).
3. Under "Newsletter," enter your email address in the box next to "Subscribe"
4. A dialog box will appear to confirm that you are subscribed.
5. Click on "Manage your Preferences" to choose what emails you want to receive.

If you are already on the FFI email list, you can update your preferences using steps 1 – 3. When you enter your email address, an "error" message will appear with an option to update your profile. You can change whatever you need to, at this point.

While you are on the FFI website, click on some of the options at the top of the page; take a look around; you may learn something new about Friendship Force.

For questions about your FFMNTC Membership, Contact Membership Chair Jane Bardon at: janesbardon@gmail.com or 651-484-7989 (leave message).

FF Journey to the Philippines, October 2017

My passion is travel so when I saw the Friendship Force trip to the Philippines, a country I had not visited before, I jumped at the chance. Or maybe I should say, I *limped* at the chance, because 10 weeks earlier I had had a total knee replacement. I thought FF was a good choice, though, since we are mostly older travelers.

After a loooong flight and a 14-hour time difference, I met my six fellow travelers in a Manila hotel - two from Australia, one from Japan, one from New Zealand and three of us from the USA. Our hotel was located in the oldest part of the city, with beautiful colonial buildings, old cathedrals, cobblestone streets, all surrounded by a thick wall. Manila dates back to 1570, built by the Spanish Conquistadors who occupied it for 300 years. They built many beautiful buildings, but mostly for themselves, and they were not easy task masters for the locals. After the end of the Spanish American war, Manila was ceded to the Americans, who occupied it for about 50 years, with a brief change of hands to the Japanese. In 1947 the Americans returned the Philippines to the Filipinos. We toured Manila for three days, visiting churches, museums, parks, and historical sites.



Photo 1: Mountain town Baguio

The Philippine climate is hot and humid, and October is right at the edge of the monsoon season. After four days in the lowlands, we headed north into a stunning mountainous region, eventually arriving at the city of Baguio,

(Philippines continued)



Photo 5: Local Jeepney transport



Photo 4: Elementary school kids

6000' up. In days gone by, Baguio was a retreat from the heat in the low lands for the American military. A big property was turned into a shady park with an Officer's club, now a museum. There are cottages for rent, a small American cemetery and a golf club. Nowadays it belongs to the Philippine people. Upon arrival, we met our hosts and were treated to a wonderful welcome with speeches, indigenous dancers, and outstanding Philippine potluck. Our hosts were all still working, so we spent only a weekend with them, but they packed it full of fun activities. One day we drove up and up and up to even higher elevations. The view was hampered by an incredible downpour, but we could still make out terraced rice paddies and cabbage fields to the horizon. We stopped at a small place for lunch of beautiful, fresh vegetable dishes. The roads were very good, having been put in many years ago by the American Corps of Engineers and well-maintained by the Filipinos since then, but when the streets started to flood, our host decided to turn back home. The rest of the week we stayed in a hotel in Baguio. We toured many more beautiful sites, accompanied by the Baguio couple who had found the host families and organized the tours. Next, we traveled to the city of Naga where we met our new host families. My delightful hostess was 25 years old and she hosted two of us. I cannot imagine my grandchildren hosting two aged women for three nights. Our day hosts came from a service club of the Naga University, students who were recruited by their advisor, Leo. He is an instructor at the university and put together the program for our week-long stay

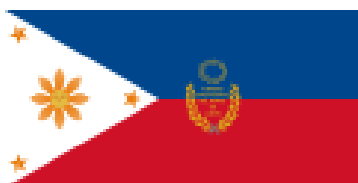
in Naga. Leo is also very active in Habitat for Humanity, and we visited an entire neighborhood of houses he had been instrumental in building. For our final hoorah in the area we stayed at a small resort on one of the many islands. From there we set out to see some of the uninhabited islands with striking white beaches surrounded by warm, crystal clear water. "Survivor" was filmed on one of these islands. We traveled on boats that looked like they came from the time when the Polynesians first sailed the Pacific. We had to wade out into the water and climb up a rickety ladder when the waves were down. With my knee it was almost asking the impossible, so the sailors helped by hauling me up by my shorts – very distinguished! We repeated this many times going from island to island. Then it happened.... the ladder fell off. Evidently OSHA had not been there! It hit me hard in the shin, but the helpers were able to fling me onto the boat. One of the Australians said, "Lucky it hit your bad leg, so you still have one good one".

The Philippines is an island nation with a tropical climate, forested Mountains, lowlands with fields, flowers, fruits, great food and unbelievable traffic. The Filipinos are incredibly hard working but often still poor, yet they are always friendly, helpful and smiling. Many of the men do not live at home; they work as seafarers for international container ships and come home once a year for a month or so. Many other Filipino men and women work internationally as nurses.



The infamous boat out of water

As is often the case when traveling, the trip had its challenges but we enjoyed the Philippines and its people and hope one day the country can become a member of Friendship Force International.



Submitted by *Susanne Wolter*
 honorary lifetime member of
 Friendship Force Twin Cities

The Friendship Force of Minnesota – Twin Cities
Invites you to our
40th Anniversary Celebration

Share Memories with our Long-term Members

Meet our Open World Delegates from Ukraine

Sunday, September 9, 2018

1:00 to 4:00 PM

Lafayette Club – Lakeview Room (www.lafayetteclub.com)

2800 Northview Road, Minnetonka Beach MN 55361

Luncheon Buffet: \$35 per person

Cash Bar – Valet Parking

Guests and Potential Members Welcome

Members are encouraged to contact friends who have been FFMNTC Members in the past and invite them to the Anniversary Celebration. RSPV Contacts to be added later.



WEST ALAJUELA, COSTA RICA JOURNEY



*Thanks to Rosie Foreman
and Cindy Cauble for the
photos*

**FF.MINNESOTA.VP
Jane Bardon
11 Pheasant Lane
Saint Paul MN 55127**